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Krystina L. Quow  
*Duke University*

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# An Introspective Analysis of the Etiological Relationships of Psychopathy in Serial Killers and Successful Business Men

Krystina L. Quow

Duke University

## Abstract

*Ted Bundy. Jeffrey Dahmer. Charles Manson. Decades following their acts of violence, their names continue to incite fear as well as perplexity into the motivations that brought about their heinous crimes. As individuals possessing psychopathic personalities, they used their charm and quick wit to both manipulate and gain the trust of their victims. While their names do not elicit the same emotional response as Bundy or Manson, Bernie Madoff and Steve Jobs may also express the symptomology characteristic of psychopathy. But rather than committing violent crimes, they channeled their talents to the advancement of their careers and toward financial gain. However, some developmental factors must have influenced the manner in which they chose to use their personality traits for their own gain. The key to these differences may involve the etiology at the foundation of their psychopathy and the ways in which their childhood experiences shaped their adult personalities.*

## Introduction

Psychopathy is a complex personality disorder with an estimated prevalence of ~1% in the general population. This estimate increases ~15-20% within the prison populations (Dolan, 2004). Although psychopathy is not synonymous with violence, psychopaths have been observed to be responsible for more than fifty percent of the serious crimes committed in the United States (Hare, 1993). Psychopathy is a construct that encompasses a cluster of symptoms that come together in the manifestation of this particular type of personality. Psychologist, Dr. Robert Hare, defines psychopathy as a personality disorder, which involves a “cluster of [socially deviant] behaviors and inferred personality traits, most of which society views as pejorative” (Hare, 1993). As a personality disorder, it spans the life course, with symptoms observed in all stages of development (Dolan, 2004). Interestingly, it is common for non-psychopathic individuals to display similar sorts of behaviors noted as symptoms of psychopathy. Psychopaths are social predators with shallow emotions and lack a conscience, thus enabling them to maneuver through life without any sense of regret or guilt (Hare, 1993).

The origins of psychopathy as described today began through the work of psychiatrist, Dr. Hervey Cleckley. In his book, *The Mask of Sanity*, Cleckley examined fifteen case studies of his patients, which he used to identify sixteen criteria for psychopathy (Warren & South, 2006). Dr. Cleckley worked with offenders and patients in psychiatric hospitals where he observed that many did not display the usual symptoms of mental illness, but appeared relatively normal (Warren & South, 2006). These individuals were not delusional and did not exhibit irrational thinking, the usual hallmark signs of mental illness (Hare & Babiak, 2006). Instead he observed a lack of a ‘moral compass’ within these individuals that caused them to harm or manipulate others (Hare & Babiak, 2006). Although identified in 1941, the etiology of psychopathy continues to elude those in the field of psychology and psychiatry. However, potential risk factors for psychopathy have been studied such as genetic and neurocognitive vulnerabilities, parental influences, and the presence of callous-unemotional traits in childhood.

From Dr. Cleckley’s work and his own clinical observations, Dr. Robert Hare, developed the Psychopathy Checklist (PCL) using theoretical and clinical methodology (Blair, Mitchell, & Blair, 2006). The

Psychopathy Checklist provides a detailed framework of how to identify those individuals who fall into the category of psychopathy, by allowing for a clear picture of their disordered personalities. Although only a trained professional can administer the checklist, it has been observed to be a useful diagnostic tool in helping to identify psychopaths, (Hare 1993).

The PCL-R is a twenty-item test that is used to “detect the presence of prototypical psychopathic personality” (Warren & South, 2006). Hare’s twenty psychopathy characteristics can be divided amongst a two-factor structure, with factor one expressing the individuals affect and interpersonal skills, such as the presence of callous-unemotional traits and factor two examining their behaviors and social deviance (Hare, 1993 & Blair et al., 2006).

#### I. Emotional/ Interpersonal:

1. Glibness/Superficial Charm
2. Grandiose Sense of Self-Worth
4. Pathological Lying
5. Conning/Manipulative
6. Lack of Remorse or Guilt
7. Shallow Affect
8. Callous/Lack of Empathy
16. Failure to Accept Responsibility for Own Actions

#### II. Social Deviance

3. Need for stimulation/Proneness to Boredom
9. Parasitic Lifestyle
10. Poor Behavioral Controls
12. Early Behavioral Problems
13. Lack of Realistic, Long-Term Goals
14. Impulsivity
15. Irresponsibility
18. Juvenile Delinquency
19. Revocation of Conditional Release

Characteristics: 11. Promiscuous Sexual Behavior, 17. Many Short-Term Marital Relationships, and 20. Criminal Versatility, do not fit into either factor but are still considered to be criteria for psychopathy.

Through his observations, Dr. Hare determined that adults receiving a score of thirty and above on the PCL-R are generally considered to be psychopathic in nature while those adults scoring less than 20 are considered to be non-psychopathic (Hare, 1993). PCL-R items are scored from 0, indicating no presence of psychopathic characteristics to a score of 40, or a perfect match for prototypical psychopathy. If an individual clearly has a trait, they obtain 2 points, if only partially they obtain 1 point, and zero points if there is no expression of the trait (Hare, 1993). While there is less established criteria for the presence of psychopathic behaviors in children, Dr. Hare established that children scoring 27 and above as indicating a child who exhibited signs of psychopathy (Hare, 1993). The PCL-R is most commonly used in forensic settings and within correctional facilities. Another test for diagnosing psychopathy is the PCL Screening Version (SV), a test derived from the PCL-R. With only 12 items, this checklist is typically used within the general population and for psychiatric patients (Hare & Babiak, 2006). The checklist is scored from 0 to 24, with a score of 18 indicating the cut off for psychopathy (Hare & Babiak, 2006).

Through the defining of these characteristics, four classifications of psychopathy have emerged: primary, secondary, distempered, and charismatic. The primary psychopathy reflects the factor one characteristics, exhibiting difficulties with interpersonal skills and emotional deficiencies (Baird, 2002). Primary psychopaths are known to be manipulative



and lack remorse for their actions. Cleckley determined those who fit these criteria for primary psychopathy suffer from 'semantic aphasia', where these individuals had difficulty understanding those emotional experiences common to others (Millon, Millon Meagher, Grossman, & Ramnath, 2004). Thus rather than being in tune with their emotions, primary psychopaths have shallow emotions and do not respond to emotional stimuli. Primary psychopaths also have the ability to purposefully inhibit their antisocial impulsivity (Baird, 2002).

Conversely, secondary psychopaths reflect the behaviors and social deviance of the factor two characteristics. These individuals are quick-tempered and impulsive, living unstable lifestyles. While displaying a lack of responsibility and poor behavioral control, secondary psychopaths do not illustrate the lack of remorse seen in primary psychopaths, as these individuals are more prone to guilt (Baird, 2002). While primary and secondary psychopathy are highly correlated, they are distinct in their symptomology and manifestation. Distempered psychopaths are well-socialized individuals who express episodic emotional outbursts of rage (Lykken, 1995). Generally, these individuals are known to be males with strong sexual urges (Lykken, 1995). Charismatic psychopaths are "charming and attractive liars" (Lykken, 1995). They are irresistible and are easily able to manipulate others using their fast-talking and competent talents (Lykken, 1995).

Sociopaths, like psychopaths, are individuals whom exhibit a disregard for the feelings of others (Hare, 1993). However, sociopaths are not as manipulative as psychopaths and their social deviance is more shown in breaking the rules of society due to their impulsivity (Hare, 1993).

Although sociopathy is not a formal psychiatric condition, sociopaths elicit patterns of attitudes and behaviors that are considered antisocial and criminal by society at large (Hare & Babiak, 2006). Their actions, however, are seen as normal or necessary by the social environment in which they are associated, such as a gang (Hare & Babiak, 2006). Unlike psychopaths, sociopaths may have a conscience and capacity for empathy and guilt but their ideals of right and wrong are skewed and based on the norms of their subculture (Hare & Babiak, 2006).

Like sociopathy, psychopathy is related to Antisocial Personality Disorder (ASPD). Although these disorders are often used interchangeably due to their similarities, the two disorders are not synonymous. In the current version of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV), the criteria that depict ASPD are more behavioral, and do not include the characteristics that are specific to psychopathy which primarily encompass interpersonal and affective functioning and callous-unemotional traits (Yager, 1999). Those diagnosed with psychopathy have also been observed to possess higher levels of remorselessness when compared to those with ASPD (Warren & South, 2006).

Psychopathy is instead thought of as an umbrella term encapsulating both sociopathy and ASPD. While most offenders scoring high on the PCL-R also possess the ASPD criteria, most of those with ASPD do not meet the necessary criteria for psychopathy (Dolan, 2004). Among the prison population, 70-80% meet criteria for ASPD, but only 20% of those with ASPD score over 30 on the PCL-R (Dolan, 2004). While this overlap in prevalence and high rates of comorbidity indicates a relationship, the extent of this relationship remains unclear.



Clinicians have interpreted this association to be that psychopathy is a more “severe, malignant, and interpersonally violent form” of ASPD, thus encompassing antisocial behaviors with these callous-unemotional traits (Warren et al., 2006).

While the prevalence of psychopathy amongst the prison population is relatively low at 20%, the gender distribution amongst those diagnosed as prototypical psychopaths are skewed. Across both ASPD and psychopathy, men appear to demonstrate these types of personalities at a higher prevalence when compared women. Studies of female inmates have suggested lower rates of psychopathy, indicating that women typically scored “4-6 points lower than...male samples” (Warren & South, 2006). While a difference in prevalence was seen when examining gender, no differences were observed with regard to ethnicity (Warren & South, 2006). Although personality traits are relatively stable across adolescence into adulthood, psychopathy appears to decrease overtime with age, with the peak being in early adulthood (Warren & South, 2006).

Due to their personalities, psychopaths do not make reliable friends and often lead a parasitic existence, taking advantage of the generosity or gullibility of others, abusing their trust (Hare & Babiak, 2006). They prefer to live off the work of others than to use their own efforts, and have no reservations about asking for financial support (Hare & Babiak, 2006). Psychopaths are in constant need of novel stimulation or their environment easily bores them. Psychopaths are social chameleons that have a talent for reading people quickly, impeccable communication skills and possess the ability to adjust their personality to fit their current situation. Their primary motivator is the chance to con and

manipulate others, as they are always aware of those who can easily be scammed (Hare & Babiak, 2006). Unless caught and prosecuted for breaking the law, psychopaths suffer little consequences for their actions, as few victims contact the authorities because of the shame they may feel for being conned (Hare & Babiak, 2006). Even large businesses often choose not to involve the authorities for fear of tarnishing their reputation, a fact that psychopaths often use this to their advantage (Hare & Babiak, 2006).

## **Etiology**

### **Callous-Unemotional Traits**

Callous-Unemotional Traits (CU) are hallmark to psychopathy in that they are the characteristics that distinguish this personality disorder from antisocial behavior. Within youth who exhibit antisocial behavior, CU traits seem to be present in a subgroup of these antisocial youth (Frick, 2009). CU traits include a lack of guilt, lack of empathy, and superficial charm, traits considered primary in the clinical description of psychopathy (Blair, Colledge, & Mitchell, 2001). A high rate of CU traits in childhood has been observed to show some increased risk for psychopathic traits as an adult (Frick, 2009). While some level of antisocial and aggressive behavior is normal in children and adolescents, those who exhibit CU traits were found to express more severe aggression (Frick & Viding, 2009). Antisocial youth without CU traits tend to show less aggression, and any aggressive behavior that is exhibited tends to be largely reactive (Frick & Viding, 2009). Conversely, individuals with psychopathy show an increased risk for both reactive and instrumental or goal-oriented aggression (Dolan, 2004).

Antisocial children and adolescents with CU traits have unique personality characteristics, and tend to express more fearless and thrill-seeking behaviors along with less trait anxiety and neuroticism compared to those without CU traits (Frick, 2009). Additionally, children and adolescents with CU traits often show the highest rates of impulsivity, narcissism, and antisocial behavior (Frick, 2009). Adolescents with CU traits also tend to express low behavioral inhibition, a characteristic that may cause the child to be less responsive to socialization (Dolan, 2004). Behavioral inhibition has also been observed to be critical in the development of a conscience in young children (Dolan, 2004). Children who show antisocial behavior during early childhood are at a greater risk for showing antisocial and criminal behavior in adulthood. As a result, youth who illustrate a childhood onset to their antisocial behavior tend to score higher on measures of CU traits than those who illustrate signs of CU traits in adolescence (Frick, 2009). Children with CU traits and antisocial behavior tend to exhibit more conduct problems and are more likely to become law-breakers compared to their peers with conduct disorder without CU traits (Frodi, Dernevik, Sepa, Philipson, & Bragesjo, 2001). Additionally, measures that include CU traits were associated with general or violent recidivism and poorer treatment outcomes, which seem to predict later antisocial behavior (Frick & Viding, 2009). CU traits may be a risk factor that cause children to be more vulnerable for life-course persistent antisocial behavior, as they start offending at a young age and continue across the lifespan (Viding, Blair, Moffitt, & Plomin, 2005).

Callous-Unemotional traits have been observed to be relatively stable from late childhood to early adolescence, both when

assessed by self-report and parent reports (Frick, 2009). Conduct problems in children with CU traits were found to be under strong genetic influence at age seven (heritability 0.81) with little influence of shared environments (Frick, 2009). Few studies have cited that shared environmental influences may only be important for girls who have stable and high levels of CU traits, however, no significant gender differences have been observed (Viding & McCrory, 2012). In contrast, antisocial behavior in children without CU traits showed modest genetic influence (heritability 0.30) and a substantial environmental influence in both shared (.34) and non-shared (.26) environments (Frick, 2009). Heritability of CU traits remained consistent across time and 58% of the stability of CU traits is estimated to be due to genetic influences (Viding & McCrory, 2012). This may reflect that genes and the environment interact to either promote or moderate the development of CU traits.

### Neurological Causes

Neurocognitive vulnerabilities have also been associated with psychopathy and are partially distinct from those associated with antisocial behavior. The genetic vulnerabilities associated with callous-unemotional traits may also contribute to some of the neural vulnerabilities that are characteristic of antisocial behavior with CU traits (Viding & McCrory, 2012). While it is important to note that psychopathy is not a neurological condition, individuals who exhibit psychopathic traits have been observed to have reduced activation in both the amygdala, the anterior cingulate cortex (ACC) and the ventromedial prefrontal cortex (vmPFC) in response to emotional words and emotional memory (Viding & McCrory, 2012). The amygdala, vmPFC, orbitofrontal cortex (OFC) and the caudate



are brain areas involved with processing emotional salience, reinforcement learning, and emotion regulation (Viding & McCrory, 2012). The amygdala and vmPFC have also been implicated in moral reasoning (Blair, 2007). Deficiencies in these areas in psychopathy suggest that moral reasoning and other reinforcement-based decision-making may be disrupted (Blair, 2007).

An area of research interest examines the manner in which psychopaths process emotional material in the form of words and pictures. Functional MRI scans indicate psychopaths do not show the same patterns of brain responses to verbal and visual emotional material, as do non-psychopathic individuals (Hare & Babiak, 2006). Non-psychopathic individuals depicted different brain responses to emotional versus neutral stimuli, where psychopaths respond similarly for both types of stimuli (Hare & Babiak, 2006). Additionally, psychopaths did not illustrate increases in the activity of the limbic regions normally associated with processing emotional material (Hare & Babiak, 2006). Conversely, psychopaths activated regions involved in the understanding and production of language (Hare & Babiak, 2006). The functional MRI findings in children with antisocial behaviors and callous-unemotional traits mirrored those typically reported in adult psychopaths (Viding & McCrory, 2012). This suggests a functional neurological bases for why individuals with antisocial behavior with CU traits appear abnormally unaffected by others' distress (Viding & McCrory, 2012). In the emotion-processing task, children with CU traits have difficulties processing other people's fearful and sad facial expressions, vocal tones, and body postures (Viding & McCrory, 2012). Their difficulty processing others' distress may stem from their inability to feel distress themselves (Frick, 2009). Reduced

functional coupling between the amygdala and the OFC was also observed when children with antisocial behavior and CU traits after viewing fearful facial expressions (Viding & McCrory, 2012).

Additional brain structures have also been implicated in psychopathy pathogenesis. Developing boys with CU traits have been shown to exhibit increased grey matter concentration in several areas implicated in decision making, moral processing and self-reflection, including the OFC, insula, ACC, posterior cingulate cortex and superior temporal cortex (Viding & McCrory, 2012). Interestingly, a decrease white matter concentration was observed in these areas where grey matter concentration was found to have increased (Viding & McCrory, 2012). These findings suggest that children with CU traits may have atypical brain structures in many of the same areas where white and grey matter abnormalities have been seen in adult psychopaths (Viding & McCrory, 2012).

## Genetic Factors

Gene-Environment interactions have also been studied as a potential factor for the etiology of psychopathy. It is important to note that no genes have been observed to directly code for psychopathic behaviors. Rather, genes code for proteins that may influence other phenotypic characteristics such as the neurological vulnerabilities, found to potentially increase the risk for psychopathy. The long allele of the 5-HTTLPR gene, which is the allele responsible for amygdala reactivity was associated with CU traits in adolescents from low socioeconomic backgrounds, while the short allele predisposes individuals to impulsive antisocial behavior (Viding & McCrory, 2012). This illustrates that the genetic risk for psychopathy, with concern



to this allele, may manifest itself only under unfavorable environmental circumstances. Additionally, the MAOA-L allele, which is a risk allele for antisocial behavior, may lead to predisposition to threat reactive and impulsive, rather than psychopathic antisocial behavior (Viding & McCrory, 2012).

## Parental Influences

Parents may also be a strong factor that influences psychopathy in adulthood. Psychopaths have differing backgrounds and varying predispositions that seem to suggest a unique etiology to their antisocial behavior (Frick & Viding, 2009). Studies in children and adolescents indicate that coercive-parenting interactions, the absence of a positive and affectionate parent-child bond, neglect, inconsistent parents and corporal punishment may all be potential risk factors contributing to psychopathy in adulthood (Frodi et al., 2001). Additionally, the early separation or absence of attachment figures may predispose a child toward a higher degree of CU traits (Frodi et al., 2001). High levels of CU traits at age seven has been observed to be associated with negative parenting in early childhood (Viding & McCrory, 2012). Boys with antisocial behavior and CU traits were observed to be less responsive to discipline techniques, such as a time-out, than those boys with antisocial behaviors without CU traits (Hawes, Dadds, Frost, & Hasking, 2011). Rather, these children with CU traits illustrated punishment insensitivity with an increased sensitivity to rewards (Viding, Jones, Frick, Moffitt, & Plomin, 2008). Punishment insensitivity may evoke harsher and more inconsistent punishments from their parents, as their parents may increase the severity of punishments in the hope of being more effective (Hawes et al., 2011). However, these high levels of corporal

punishment were associated with increased CU traits over time, whereas high levels of parenting warmth and involvement predicted decreased levels of CU traits (Hawes et al., 2011). CU traits are stable and appear to remain apparent past the age of forty, at which point more aggressive and impulsive behaviors tend to decline (Dolan, 2004). CU traits have been observed to be malleable in childhood, increasing and decreasing with age (Viding & McCrory, 2012). Positive parenting in girls and parental involvement in boys has been associated with a decrease in CU traits over time (Viding & McCrory, 2012).

However, in contrast to the assertions of parent influences correlating to CU traits, it has been postulated that parental influence whether positive or negative cannot be directed correlated to psychopathy in adulthood (Poythress, 2006). Dr. Robert Hare observed “no convincing evidence that psychopathy is the direct result of early social or environmental factors” (Poythress, 2006). Rather the actions of parents may indicate gene-environments interactions. Some parents who abuse their children may harbor a genetic predisposition toward aggression, impulsivity, and similar traits, which they then transmit to their children, resulting in the correlation between early abuse and childhood aggression (Poythress, 2006). A link has been suggested between abuse and psychopathic characteristics described as the factor one traits (Poythress, 2006). Abuse in childhood may also elicit a diminished capacity for affective responding thus causing the child to become desensitized to future painful or anxiety provoking experiences (Poythress, 2006). Abuse has been moderately related to the impulsive and irresponsible lifestyle associated with psychopathy (Poythress, 2006). Those who were abused or neglected during their childhood, had significantly

higher PCL-R scores in adulthood when compared to psychopathic individuals who did not experience abuse or neglect (Poythress, 2006). A higher psychopathy score on the PCL-R appeared to be associated with more violent crime, a higher number of convictions, more foster home placements, and a higher incidence of physical abuse experienced in childhood (Frodi et al., 2001).

## White-Collar Psychopathy

### Background

Although the term psychopathy is most commonly associated with murder and violent offences, the majority of those who score highly on the PCL-R do not go on to commit violent crimes. While the average person scores ~5 on the psychopathy checklist, examples of those who express psychopathic tendencies may not be uncommon (Hare & Babiak, 2006). Fraud in business, doctors who fake their credentials and practice medicine without a license, and the infamous ENRON scandal are all examples of white-collar psychopathy in the media.

For corporate psychopaths, business offers opportunities to make money and gain status. However, in order to be successful in business, psychopaths must operate covertly. Using the traits hallmark to this personality disorder, psychopaths are able to skillfully lie and manipulate employers to view them as the ideal candidate for the position (Hare & Babiak, 2006). Psychopaths fabricate a work history tailored to the job requirements allowing them to seem competent, talented, and intelligent during interviews thus allowing them to present the impression of the perfect job candidate. (Hare & Babiak, 2006). After obtaining the job, psychopaths are not team players and often accept praise

for work that is not their own (Hare & Babiak, 2006). They strive to build their careers to the top positions of the organization in spite of the consequences. Once their manipulation has expanded to the influential members of the organization, psychopaths are able to ascend to higher-level positions (Hare & Babiak, 2006).

### Case Studies

*Bernie Madoff.* Bernard Madoff was born to immigrant parents who worked hard to make a life for themselves in the United States. Although he came from a stable middle class family, he often described a 'rags to riches' story, illustrating a life in poor and less affluent neighborhood (Kirtzman, 2009). In school, Madoff struggled to achieve the high academic goals set by his friends. He was not the brightest student and as a result this caused him to become angry with himself, and to develop an inferiority complex (Kirtzman, 2009). From his childhood Madoff learned that "the more money, [you possessed] the more esteem" you amassed and "the more people looked up to you" (Kirtzman, 2009). This precedent set the tone for much of what Madoff strived to achieve. His greed stemmed for his desire to make money and assert his dominance.

His former employees describe white-collar criminal, Bernie Madoff as a ruthless, detached individual who showed little remorse for robbing his innocent victims of their life savings. As the founder of the Wall Street firm Bernie L. Madoff Investment Securities LLC, he operated a Ponzi scheme, which became the largest case of financial fraud in U.S. history (Creswell & Thomas, 2009). A Ponzi scheme is essentially a money making strategy with no exit plan, causing Madoff to constantly bring in new investors to finance the scam (Creswell &



Thomas, 2009). He cheated his investors out of their lifetimes with promises of a substantial financial return from the stock market. His victims sought the comfort of investing with a man whom they trusted. His psychopathic traits helped him to climb the corporate ladder and inevitably brought about his downfall. Described as a terrific salesman, Madoff raised himself from his modest immigrant upbringings to become the chairman of the major stock exchange, Nasdaq (Creswell & Thomas, 2009).

In his business he was a reclusive, standoffish and controlled man, who was very concerned about his public image (Creswell & Thomas, 2009). A chameleon, Madoff was good at providing investors with the impression of competence in the workplace, while in reality he was a greedy manipulator, hungry to accumulate wealth so much so that he did not care who he hurt in the process. He micromanaged his businesses in both New York and London, having cameras installed so he could watch the operations within his offices (Creswell & Thomas, 2009). Madoff's use of a Ponzi scheme illustrates his lack of fear of getting caught for his actions. His desire to accumulate wealth, dominate others, and prove his intelligence, allowed him to dupe investors and regulators for years.

*Steve Jobs.* Although not a white-collar criminal or a diagnosed psychopath, the former CEO of Apple, Steve Jobs, may also possess psychopathic qualities that aided in success. Jobs, received an average All-American upbringing from loving and encouraging parents. His father sparked his interest in electronics, a hobby the two shared. Although he knew from an early age that he was adopted, it is believed that the control, independence and drive that motivated Jobs in his work stemmed from his abandonment during his childhood

(Issacson, 2011). However, this was an idea that Jobs would quickly dismiss (Issacson, 2011).

In a 60 minutes interview the author of Jobs' biography, Walter Issacson, described his former employer as a manipulative man who knew how to emotionally push people as though attuned to their psychological vulnerabilities (Fager, 2011). He was an intense personality who was a controlling and passionate perfectionist, which he brought out in his products (Fager, 2011). He could also be abrasive and often defensive when challenged (Fager, 2011). Additionally, Jobs could also be described as a visionary and innovator, which fueled his success in the company. He pushed his employees to be better and his honesty, although cruel, helped to improve the quality of the product. He thought nothing of publicly humiliating his employees and often made them cry (Fager, 2011). He did not mind people pushing back at him and there was an award at Apple for the person who was able to rise to this challenge most effectively (Fager, 2011). He would take credit for work he had not done, throw tantrums when he did not get his way, and would often park his Mercedes in handicapped spots as though the rules did not apply to him (Fager, 2011).

*Ted Bundy.* Serial killer and psychopath Theodore Bundy is known for the rape and murder of thirty women between 1969 and 1975. After giving birth to her son, Bundy's mother, Louise left him in the hospital for several months until her parents decided to keep the child (Moes, 1991). Bundy spent most of his childhood believing his grandparents to be his biological parents and thought of his mother as a sister. This early abandonment from his mother deprived him the attachment and bond between a mother and child. As he did not learn to connect



with his mother during infancy and this could have caused his deficits in connecting and empathizing with others during adulthood. Bundy was devastated after learning of his true parentage and his classmates would often call him a “bastard” (Moes, 1991). Bundy endured verbal and mental abuse as a child from his grandfather, who was known to have a violent temper (Moes, 1991). His grandfather would often beat the family dog in front of Bundy, which may have affected his cognitive development during his childhood (Moes, 1991).

His grandfather kept pornography in the house where it was easily accessible to Bundy during his childhood and adolescence (Moes, 1991). In later interviews prior to his execution, Bundy cited his addiction to pornography as a motivator for his violent and sexual crimes and deviance (Michaud & Aynesworth, 2000). Within Bundy’s family there was also a history of mental illness. His grandmother suffered from depression, for which she received shock therapy, in addition to having agoraphobia (Moes, 1991). His troublesome childhood history coupled with the loss he felt after the end of his relationship with Stephanie Brooks, may have sparked his sexual assault and murder of women who resembled Brooks (Moes, 1991).

*Charles Manson.* Psychopath Charles Manson manipulated his followers, known as The Family, to commit murders to incite Helter Skelter, a race war between blacks and whites in the late 1960s. Charles Manson was the illegitimate child of his 16-year old mother, Kathleen Maddox (Bardsley, 2012). Kathleen was a wayward teen and was in and out of jail for most of Manson’s life (Bardsley, 2012). In one instance, Manson recalled his mother allowing a waitress to have him in exchange

for a pitcher of beer after which she abandoned him at the restaurant (Bardsley, 2012). Manson never had a real father figure in his life and never met his biological father. Raised by his grandparents, Manson’s grandmother was a strict and religious woman who demanded that those in her home abide by God’s will (Bardsley, 2012). During his childhood, he was isolated. He had no friends but was described as being very imaginative (Bardsley, 2012). He began to steal at an early age and spent several years in reform schools (Bardsley, 2012). As a child he lived with many of his relatives, who may have had a detrimental affect on his development. One of his uncles believed Manson was too feminine and forced him dress up as a female for his first day of school (Montaldo, 2012). Additionally, while in the care of another relative, he witnessed a family member commit suicide (Montaldo, 2012).

### Observations

Although not a diagnosed psychopath, Steve Jobs has many similarities to known serial killer and psychopath, Ted Bundy. Neither Jobs nor Bundy were raised by their biological parents. Jobs was adopted as a young child and Bundy was raised by his grandparents and believed his mother to be his sister (Michaud & Aynesworth, 2000). Jobs knew of his adoption at an early age and his adoptive parents strived to resolve any feelings of abandonment Jobs may have felt through constant reminders that he was wanted and loved (Issacson, 2011). Conversely, when Bundy learned of his true parentage, it was a psychological blow that may have affected his ability to trust in others (Moes, 1991).

Jobs and Bundy also exhibited a great deal of intelligence and later dropped out of college. Bundy was an honors student in

psychology and was a campaigner for the Republican Party (Michaud & Aynesworth, 2011). Jobs had frustrations with formal schooling and he was known to be a prankster in elementary school to the point where his fourth grade teacher recalls bribed him to do his work (Issacson, 2011). Jobs later said this teacher may have prevented him from eventually ending up in jail for these transgressions (Issacson, 2011). His parents never punished Jobs for his disobediences but blamed the school for not challenging him and keeping him interested (Issacson, 2011). This stance taken by Jobs' parents, significantly contrasts the attitudes of Bundy's strict upbringing. While both Jobs and Bundy exhibited signs of primary psychopathy, the love and encouragement that Jobs received from his parents may have been significant as to how these two men deviated in their life courses. Jobs felt love from his parents, while Bundy was isolated. Although both were relatively independent from an early age, Jobs had the support of his family, support that Bundy never received from his own family.

Bernie Madoff may also have shared similar personality traits with Bundy and Manson. As described in the New York Times article, *The Talented Mr. Madoff*, both Bundy and Madoff "used a sharp mind and an affable demeanor to create a persona that didn't exist" and "lulled [their] victims into a false sense of security" (Creswell & Thomas, 2009). When either was publicly accused of their crimes, neither seemed to express any signs of remorse for their actions. The article even went as far as to suggest a direct linkage "whereas Mr. Bundy murdered people, Mr. Madoff murdered wallets, bank accounts, and people's sense of financial trust and security" (Creswell & Thomas, 2009). Both Bundy and Madoff sought out their victims vulnerabilities and exploited them to their

own advantage. Using the mask of innocence, they were able to manipulate and deceive those who entrusted them. Their life histories may shed some light as to their motivations and explain why Bundy chose to commit murder while Madoff chose to con his victims. Madoff felt inadequate in his academics and personal relationships, and his greed and sense of entitlement prompted his desire to accumulate wealth. Bundy may also have felt inadequacy, which fueled his revenge after the end of his relationship with his girlfriend Stephanie Brooks.

Madoff and Manson also share some comparable qualities with regard to leadership. Both Madoff and Manson exhibit signs of charismatic psychopathy, in that they were able to use their charm, cunning, and ingenuity to their advantage in their deception. Madoff was able to continue to carry on his elaborate Ponzi scheme but only with the help of those who worked for him. Madoff had to deceive all those in his company to believe the business was legitimate in order to carry on this scam without suspicion. Madoff was not only able to con those who worked for him but also those who came to Madoff Securities to invest their money. Although Manson's range of manipulation was not as far reaching as Madoff's, Manson too was able to deceive and manipulate those within The Family, convincing them to murder for the sake of what he felt was a higher purpose.

Again the deviation between these two men may stem from their childhood experiences. Manson illustrated signs of conduct disorder at a young age. This paired with his lack of remorse for his crimes suggests the presence of callous-unemotional traits in childhood. Additionally, the significance of his followers being called The Family, suggests



that Manson was searching for a family of his own where he could feel loved and supported, as he never received love from his own family. In contrast to Manson, Madoff had no previous criminal history and had a relatively normal childhood. However, both Manson and Madoff may have felt that they were never good enough: Manson with regard to not feeling worthy of his mother's love and Madoff in his academic and social relationships. Madoff strived to exert himself as the smartest and wealthiest, in order to be envied by his peers. He felt inferior to his more intelligent friends, and while a popular student amongst his classmates, he was "never a somebody" (Kirtzman, 2009).

### Conclusions

Although little is understood about the etiology of psychopathy, research within the field of psychology and psychiatry has shed some light on the affects of gene-environment interactions and the pathogenesis of this disorder. The genetic heritability of callous-unemotional traits observed in childhood as well as the atypical brain structures, appears to indicate that genetic factors may be responsible for psychopathy in adulthood. These genetic factors coupled with parental influences or some other environmental influences, may be critical to the signs of psychopathy that are apparent in childhood and how psychopathy develops within adulthood.

Research also suggests that psychopathy may not be as rare and far removed as once perceived. Psychopathic characteristics range on a spectrum where many of those within leadership positions possess some of these qualities, which they utilize in order to advance within their areas of interest. With regard to Charles Manson, Ted Bundy, Bernie Madoff and Steve Jobs, the question

remains why? What could have differed between these men that resulted in one becoming the CEO of a fortune 500 company, one being convicted of fraud, while the others were convicted of murder. The etiology of psychopathy may shed some light on how these men differed in their life courses. It appears that what sets violent psychopaths apart from those who are able to channel these characteristics into career advancement, is their childhood experiences and vulnerability for CU traits. Ted Bundy and Charles Manson, both experienced what can only be perceived as an unfortunate childhood. Experiencing abandonment at early ages from their mothers, they were unable to build that maternal bond that may be crucial to the development of future social relationships. Madoff and Jobs both grew up in middle class backgrounds, to parents who were described as nothing but supportive and loving. Their parents motivated them to work hard and to strive for their ambitions, which may have led to their business achievements.

While the similarities between these men does suggest that psychopathic traits vary, future inquiry must be performed to examine how these etiological factors can make an individual more susceptible to violence and the extent to which these etiological factors affect personality and behavior. Future research may seek to determine the specific genes responsible for the heritability of antisocial behavior in childhood and whether these genes differ with the presence of CU traits. Additionally, while some similar brain abnormalities have been cited in children with CU traits and adults with psychopathy, future research is needed to determine the extent to which these anomalies affect the personality phenotype and whether there are any genetic predispositions that cause these neurocognitive vulnerabilities to arise. Early



interventions in childhood may also prove beneficial, as positive parenting has been shown to decrease CU traits in childhood through early intervention strategies and thus lessen the risk for psychopathy in adulthood.

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The concept of academic deviance has been examined for the past 50 years while legitimate research has only begun in roughly the last 20 years (Davis et al., 1972). Academic deviance can be best considered cheating among college students who intentionally use materials, information or study aids which are prohibited in work submitted for credit. The prevalence estimates for academic deviance from past six studies range from 76 to 90% of all college students in a given study (Hart, 1984; Stern & Hovick, 1986). These rates tend to argue in support of deviance rates and rates are higher among college students than other groups. The prevalence also varies by the type of school attended, where larger public schools report more academic deviance than smaller private ones (Davis et al., 1972). Academic deviance poses a constant threat to the education system from its persistence through generations and its presence in almost every form of institutionalized education.

The antecedents of academic deviance remain an issue of heavy dispute. Studies have shown that there are more factors at work that provide motivation for cheating behavior besides academic success. These may individual or situational components to

cheating behavior. According to Hart (1984) and Irving (1996), one situational component is academic deviance originates in a student's academic environment. In most private institutions, students face a sense of community with their classmates where individuals may feel guilty about cheating. Ethical values of such institutions are encouraged more so than in other public counterparts. Another view is cheating occurs as a result of social learning (Kohn, 1984; and Kohnsich, 2006). Business students were observed to cheat more and on different dimensions than found in the studies of college students with business majors. These more recent studies have examined cheating behavior. Perceptions were found to be a factor affecting academic deviance and it was the second biggest predictor of cheating behavior (Kohn et al., 1984). Gender and age have also been seen to influence academic deviance at an individual level. In a meta-analysis, men were shown to cheat more than women (Ford & Richardson, 1994). Younger unmarried students were also found to cheat more than others (Whitley, 1998). The aim of the present study is to integrate both situational and individual components by examining stress



